

I Claim:

- 5 1. A method of providing a support service for a messaging system, the method comprising the steps of:
- (a) receiving a message for a user;
- 10 (b) sending a notification to the user informing the user of receipt of the message; and
- (c) receiving one or more predetermined directions from the user in response to the notification to the user, each of the directions instructing one or more correspondingly predetermined actions in relation to the message.
- 15 2. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the user can access the message from a first device, and the user receives the notification using one or more second devices different from the first device.
- 20 3. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the user is connected with a first communications network, and the message is received from a second communications network different from the first communications network.
- 25 4. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the predetermined actions comprise one or more of the following:
- (i) appending to the message;
- (ii) deleting the message;
- 30 (iii) forwarding the message to one or more third parties;
- (iv) specifying the duration for which the message is to be retained;

(v) redirecting the message to an electronic mail address;

(vi) redirecting the message to a facsimile machine; and

5 (vii) printing and delivering the message to a specified address.

5. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

(i) generating summary information based on the content of the message; and

10

(ii) including the summary information in the notification to the user.

6. A messaging system comprising:

15

(a) means for receiving a message for a user;

(b) means for sending a notification to the user informing the user of receipt of the message; and

20

(c) means for receiving one or more predetermined directions from the user in response to the notification to the user, each of the directions instructing one or more correspondingly predetermined actions in relation to the message.

25 7. A computer software program, recorded on a medium and capable of execution by computing means able to interpret the computer software program, the computer software program comprising:

(a) software code for receiving a message for a user;

30

(b) software code for sending a notification to the user informing the user of receipt of the message; and

(c) software code for receiving one or more predetermined directions from the user

in response to the notification to the user, each of the directions instructing one or more correspondingly predetermined actions in relation to the message.

09040730 000404
T07000 0226060